

CHAPTER 5 - SUPPORTING INFORMATION

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5.2 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

acre-foot - a measure of volume used in land modification activities; the amount of material that would cover an acre (43,560 square feet) to a depth of one foot (43,560 cubic feet); equals 1,613.4 cubic yards.

action alternative - one of the alternatives being evaluated that would involve doing something to meet the purpose(s) of the project. Opposite: No Action Alternative

algae - small (generally microscopic) plants which live either floating in the water or attached to submerged objects.

aquatic - typically found in water.

bedload - larger particles in a stream that are rolled, tumbled, bounced, or slid along the bottom by the force of the water. Sand, cobbles, and boulders are typical bedload particles.

best management practices - construction or maintenance practices which have been shown to be the most effective and practical ways of preventing impacts to environmental resources.

cubic yard - a measure of volume used in many construction activities; the amount of material that would fill a space one yard (3 feet) on each side (27 cubic feet); equals 0.00062 acre-feet.

easement - an interest in land owned by one party that allows another party to have specific, limited use of the land.

EIS - environmental impact statement. This is the most detailed type of environmental assessment document identified in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

endangered species - an animal or plant which is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant part of its range.

Endangered Species Act - a federal law, first passed in 1973, establishing federal lists of endangered and threatened wildlife and plants, which requires federal agencies to insure that any action they authorize, fund, or carry out is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of listed species.

environment - in a natural context, all of the living and non-living things in the area where an individual or a species occurs.

EPA - the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Executive Order 11988 - an order to federal agencies signed by the president requiring them to avoid or mitigate any actions which could result in impacts to the floodplains of streams.

Executive Order 11990 - an order to federal agencies signed by the president requiring them to avoid or mitigate any actions which could harm wetlands.

Executive Order 12372 - an order to federal agencies signed by the president that requires intergovernmental review of federal programs, and provides for federal agencies to consult with state and local elected officials regarding federal development activities and programs that may affect community and area development planning and to accommodate their comments to the greatest extent possible.

Executive Order 12898 - an order to federal agencies signed by the president that requires federal actions to address environmental justice in minority populations and low-income populations, signed by President Clinton on February 11, 1994.

fee title - owning all rights to a parcel of land.

floodplain - the part of a stream valley which is covered with water during a flood event. Typically associated with a flood which could occur at a given frequency (for example, the edges of a 100-year floodplain would be covered with water only during floods expected to occur, on average, less frequently than once in any 100 years).

floodway - the channel of a stream plus any adjacent floodplain areas that must be kept free of encroachment so that a specific recurrence interval flood (typically a 100-year flood) can be passed without substantial increases in flood heights. Minimum federal standards limit increases to 1.0 foot, provided that hazardous water velocities are not produced.

genus (plural: genera) - the next larger grouping of animal or plant species which are assumed to be closely related to each other.

Geographic Information System (GIS) - a computer analysis computer program that can display and evaluate almost any information which can be associated with specific places on the earth.

ground water - water which is located under the surface of the earth. Adjective form: "groundwater."

invertebrates - animals which do not have backbones. Used to refer to all animals except fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals (the vertebrates).

karst - a region in which the bedrock contains sinks, underground streams, and caverns.

managed area - specific, defined, land in public, institutional, or private ownership that has been established and is operated to protect significant features or resources.

NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) - a 1970 federal law which requires agencies to determine the environmental impacts of proposed actions, to consider alternatives to those actions, and to include a consideration of the environmental impacts when deciding which actions to conduct.

NHPA (National Historic Preservation Act) - a federal law which requires agencies to avoid or mitigate impacts to significant archaeological or historic resources.

periphyton - aquatic life which lives attached to material submerged in the water.

plankton - small (generally microscopic) animals and plants which live floating in the water.

prime farmland soils - types of soils that have physical and chemical properties which economically can sustain high crop yields.

scoping - an early part of the NEPA process when agencies and members of the public are encouraged to help focus the planned evaluation on important subject areas.

sediment - material that is moved and deposited by wind and/or water.

surface water - water visible on the surface of the ground or in a stream. Opposite: ground water.

suspended load - fine particles that move along in the mass of flowing water. Cloudy or muddy water typically includes suspended sediment.

taxon (plural: taxa) - a general term used to refer to an unknown or unspecified level of animal or plant classification. Typically used as a plural when a total includes a mixture of species, genera, and higher taxonomic categories ("28 insect taxa were found").

TDEC - the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation.

terrestrial - typically found on land.

threatened species - an animal or plant which is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

tract - a separate, identified parcel of land, usually with some sort of assigned identification number.

turbid - clouded because of the fine sediment it contains.

turbidity - the fine sediment suspended in a volume of water.

TVA - the Tennessee Valley Authority.

TWRA - the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency.

USACE - the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

USFWS - the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

water quality - the physical, chemical, and biological characteristics of water compared to recognized standards of quality necessary to maintain certain uses.

wetlands - land areas adjacent to, or away from flowing streams which support plants and animals that have high water requirements.

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